

Questions and comments by participants at 4/30/09 Malden Master Planning Forum

Notes by Mark Racicot, Metropolitan Area Planning Council 5/1/09

Questions from residents (to be considered when planning similar event in future):

Why were impacts on schools not included in the analysis?

Why was environmental impact not included on the list of top positive and negative impacts that participants could vote on? Participant indicated she would have voted for this.

Comments on the Scenarios from participants during the discussion period:

Regarding Centers and Squares – given the trends in population to aging, this is good for seniors for access to services. Also provides access to the T. Also provides areas for you to get to know your neighbors.

Demographically there will be more seniors; seniors are also going to need less expensive housing. The bikepath will be more helpful for younger groups. There is a need to understand how the various scenarios will really impact other factors (traffic, schools, crime, etc.).

Ward 6 – regarding Centers and Squares: A) His son and his friends may not choose to own homes; they may prefer to rent or own a condo. Centers and Squares accommodates the needs for this group.

B) Also organizes the city into structured areas, with some structures centralized. He was impressed with this scenario.

Centers and Squares: Concerned about skyline and ground: Concern that this scenario would not yield a cohesive physical space because would have mix of 4, 6 and 12 story structures in the same area. Business interests appear to be most assisted by Slow Growth scenario. Scenarios not cohesive; need to decide how to unify best from all. Too late to play catch up (especially in downtown).

Ward 8 - Needs to be consideration of protecting open space in conjunction with housing; bike-to-the-sea is an example. Should stitch open space into scenarios; make Malden into a true “walking city”.

Ward 3 – Impressed with the statistics on growth of seniors. Lots of seniors are homeowners; scenarios need to keep the seniors in their homes and in their neighborhoods where they belong. (applause)

Works in Malden (lived there for years in past): Only one scenario offered accessory units. There is a need for this types of unit and for single room occupancy/rooming houses. Many homeowners need to be able to rent rooms in their house in order to be able to afford to stay in their houses; there is also a group of residents that needs this type of rental unit (cannot

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afford separate apartment). Likes the Centers and Squares scenario IF accessory units were to be added to that scenario. Accessory units could also be added to Slow Growth scenario.

Rabbi - Regarding Slow Growth: When he moved to the city, there was an open field across from his house. Since then, new houses have been built across from him, very nicely done. There will always be people that want to live in this type of area; others would like the types of units that would be made available in the Centers and Squares scenario. Malden needs places for people to walk and talk, sit down, enjoy outside services (cafés). There are very few places to sit down outside in the summer.

Ward 3. Acknowledges her bias towards No Growth, but understands the need for some growth. Cannot be in denial about the character of neighborhoods; slow growth could work in some areas. Centers and Squares could work well.

Ward 4 – Appreciates the opportunity to participate and to receive information. Emphasizes the need for Walkable Areas for the city; this is needed for the health of the citizens

Ward 1 – Neighborhood Infill has more single family homes but on smaller lots; this increased density in these areas is a negative. Owner occupied Single Family housing is good, but this is too dense and outweighs the benefit (applause).

Ward 2 – Great analysis and presentation. There is an opportunity for creation of a hybrid, taking the best from each scenario. Should include open space, walkability; likes Centers and Squares, but should start in areas that are most blighted and those that areas that are nearest to the subway stations. Keep single family homes on the larger lots elsewhere.

Ward 5 – Agree with previous speaker regarding lack of cohesiveness downtown. Notes that Station Landing is incredible: includes condominiums, apartments and lots of retail. Oak Grove Village is similar. These are examples of the type of development that Malden could do.

Ward 5 – Agrees that Education and environment are important issues that should be added. Also wants to make sure that support for the arts is included in the scenarios and fits into the future development of Malden. Thinks that Centers and Squares might be the scenario that works for the arts.

Lives near Oak grove Village – it's very congested. Neighborhood had changed drastically over time. Not enough parking to support future development; development is overburdening the area, traffic issues impact her son who has asthma.

Ward 1 – Important to have a mix of single family homes and multi-family units. Does not want to see any more towers; has parking concerns. Likes scenarios that have lower height limits.

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Spring Street Ward 4 – Ward 4 is impacted the most under all scenarios. It is the oldest remaining neighborhood in Malden. Its existing development shows the history growth in Malden from farming to after World War II. Parking and traffic are major issues. She shudders to think of any scenarios that include high rise developments; the high rises in the past did not bring businesses to downtown. Centers and Squares scenario appear popular, but remember that these squares have always been there and that they allowed residents to be able to walk to get there.

Ward 6 – regarding Traffic – Centers and Squares appears to be the better alternative. Redevelopment is good, but you already cannot drive through some of these areas during some parts of the day, so do need to address traffic issues. Be sure to not develop these areas too much. Regarding infill/smaller lot sizes – This is just mini-sprawl since everyone that lives in these areas would need a car to get anywhere (this is a negative).

Ward 3 – With Centers and Squares, could walk or bike to destinations; would not need to get into a car.

Ward 8 – Need to expand upon the open spaces, for example the existing open space coming in from the ocean that includes walking paths.

There needs to be an opportunity for additional discussion/input on-line, so that more deliberative thinkers can provide input after reviewing information distributed.